

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 TAIPEI 003465

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EAP/RSP/TC AND EAP/EP, STATE PASS AIT/W

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/03/2014

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [TW](#)

SUBJECT: CHINESE TAIPEI'S APEC AGENDA: LOW-KEY MEETINGS

Classified By: AIT Director Douglas Paal, Reason 1.4 b/d

1. (C) Summary: Academia Sinica President Lee Yuan-tseh will once again represent Chinese Taipei at the APEC Leaders' Meeting in November in Santiago, Chile. Academia Sinica's Michael Hsiao and National Security Council's Connie Yang believe the Chinese Taipei delegation will try to avoid any controversial moves at the APEC Summit but will seek to play an active role in discussion of health and high tech issues. Hsiao and Yang promised that Chinese Taipei would support U.S. initiatives on transparency and anti-corruption, but would not be active on security related issues. Chinese Taipei will seek a handful of official and unofficial bilateral meetings, but is not planning for any detailed discussions at the Leaders' Meeting. Chinese Taipei representatives to the Ministers' Meeting are more likely to engage on substantive discussions on the margins, possibly including cross-Strait transportation. End Summary.

Chinese-Taipei Picking its Spots in APEC

2. (SBU) President Chen announced September 21 that Academia Sinica President Dr. Lee Yuan-tseh would once again represent him at the APEC Leaders' Meeting November 20-21 in Santiago, Chile. This will be the third straight year Lee, a 1986 Nobel Prize laureate in chemistry, has represented Chen at the annual meeting. Academia Sinica researcher Michael Hsiao, Lee's aide de camp in previous meetings and a member of the National Security Council-led group discussing Taiwan's goals for the APEC Summit characterized Chinese Taipei's objectives for the 2004 Leaders' Meeting as the same as last year: trying to secure as many formal and informal bilateral meetings with other APEC leaders as practical, actively participating in those areas where Taiwan has specific interests or expertise, and avoiding controversial situations that might damage Taiwan's standing within APEC.

3. (SBU) He saw particular opportunities for Chinese Taipei to play a role in discussions on health and the utilization of high technology to facilitate trade and bridge the digital divide. The SARS crisis in 2003 spurred the creation of a Health Task Force to analyze health consequences of trade policies, support regional health preparedness policies and to develop strategic priorities for cooperation. The recent outbreaks of Avian Flu in Asia suggest to Hsiao that it might be useful to expand this task force to allow it to better share information, review best practices, and coordinate responses. Chinese Taipei would support a call for Health Ministers to expand the scope of the Health Task Force for this purpose. Hsiao said Chinese Taipei would also support efforts to establish an APEC-supported AIDS Center in Thailand and establishment of a clearinghouse for information on vaccines.

4. (SBU) In high-tech areas Taiwan has expertise that it is eager to share with other economies in APEC. Hsiao noted the recent report issued by the APEC Secretariat lauding Chinese Taipei's use of technology to facilitate trade by increasing transparency and efficiency. Chinese Taipei has been active in efforts to bridge the digital divide within APEC, for example, by promoting telecenters for computer and digital training, and will seek to continue and expand that role, including through allocation of resources, including funding, to appropriate projects.

5. (SBU) NSC Senior Economic Advisor Connie Yang echoed Hsiao's comments that Taiwan would focus its efforts in areas where it felt it could contribute most to APEC initiatives. She highlighted in particular the issue of Avian Flu and suggested that Taiwan was well-placed to play a significant role in the development of the Health Task Force into an entity that could better support regional health preparedness activities and information sharing. Yang also noted Chinese Taipei's efforts to help other member economies develop their digital technology capabilities.

Support for U.S. Initiatives, But Security Takes Backseat

6. (C) Hsiao said that Chinese Taipei will support U.S. led anti-corruption initiatives. Although Chinese Taipei cannot

sign the UN Convention against Corruption, the government is planning to incorporate the principles of the convention in Taiwan law. Chinese Taipei will also support proposals for APEC reforms. Chinese Taipei will not seek a prominent role in discussion of security related issues, but will support APEC consensus. Although supporting U.S. calls for counter-terrorism activities within APEC, including nonproliferation, restrictions on MANPADS, and attention to economic security issues, Hsiao was concerned that an active approach in security related discussions would be counterproductive. Yang later agreed that the NSC also believes any intervention by Chinese Taipei on these issues would be more damaging than helpful. She said the NSC clearly understands that it is best for Taiwan to remain silent in these discussions.

Seeking Bilateral Meetings...

17. (C) As in past years, Chinese Taipei will try to take advantage of the APEC Leaders' Meeting to schedule official and informal bilateral meetings with regional leaders. Hsiao suggested Chinese Taipei would attempt to schedule four or five official meetings, listing Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, and Papua New Guinea as potential partners. Topics of discussion might include trade issues, development assistance for PNG, and Taiwan's security relationship with Japan. Taiwan is likely to again request a meeting with a high-level U.S. official (not the President) during the Summit.

But No Substantive Cross-Strait Dialogue

18. (C) Hsiao was hopeful that Lee would have the opportunity to have an informal discussion with Chinese President Hu Jintao, but insisted there were no plans for Lee to pass any detailed message from President Chen regarding the possibility of expanding dialogue between the two sides of the Strait. Lee said to the press November 2 that he felt he was not the right envoy for a cross-strait dialogue and declared the most effective way to conduct cross-strait communication is for Hu and Chen to meet face to face. Lee said he will make this suggestion directly to Hu Jintao at APEC if he has a chance to meet him. Hsiao said Chinese Taipei was optimistic that detailed discussions regarding cross-Strait ties, including direct flights for Chinese New Year, might occur during the Joint Ministerial Meetings, November 17-18.

19. (SBU) Comment: Taiwan's leadership has traditionally used APEC, one of the few prominent international organizations of which Taiwan is a full member, primarily as a forum in which to interact on an equal basis with regional partners. This has paid dividends in areas where Taiwan is strong, such as telecommunications and high technology discussions, and Chinese Taipei's representatives have been valuable contributors to APEC's activities on these topics. In the health care field, Taiwan clearly sees APEC's Health Task Force as an opportunity to demonstrate its value in international health cooperation. The Taiwan government appears to be reluctant to risk its standing in APEC by courting the controversy that would invariably surround an attempt to support actively discussion of security issues. Although supportive of including security discussions within APEC, Taiwan policy-makers believe Taiwan's interests are best served by taking a low-profile approach at the upcoming Leaders' Meeting and benefiting from any positive outcomes. End Comment.

PAAL